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Press Focus Puzzles Dallas

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Dallas

While opposing lawyers maneuver for position in the trial of Jack Ruby, who is charged with killing Lee Harvey Oswald, the man accused of assassinating President Kennedy, the city of Dallas finds itself once again the object of searching, penetrating, and sometimes puzzling journalistic pieces.

A sudden spate of national

promises in various publications throughout the country has taken Dallasites by surprise. Dallas had come under heavy editorial fire in the weeks immediately following the murder of President Kennedy on a downtown street while his motorcade was on the way to Market Hall, where he was to have addressed a luncheon arranged in his honor by several civic groups.

Oswald had been arrested a few hours after the assassination.

Killing Televised

He was killed a couple of days later by Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police headquarters as he was about to be transferred to state custody to await trial on murder charges growing out of the assassination and the killing of a Dallas patrolman, J. D. Tippit, who had sought to question him.

As the killing of Oswald took place in plain view of television cameras, millions of American viewers witnessed the act.

Attorneys for Ruby have never denied that he killed Oswald, and they plan to base their defense on a contention that he was emotionally upset and deranged mentally at the time he killed Oswald.

Change of Venue Sought

Legal maneuvers have occupied much of the court time of Judge Joe B. Brown, who is presiding over the case. Ruby's attorneys first sought to have him released from county jail on bond. They finally gave up on this attempt.

Now they are seeking to have the trial moved from Dallas to another county on the contention that he would not be able to get a fair trial here.

A hearing has been set for Feb. 10 by Judge Brown on the request for a change of venue. Defense subpoenas have been sent out to 100 persons in Dallas to appear in court for the hearing. Some of the city's top business and professional figures are included in the 96 subpoenas.

They include Mayor Earle Cabell, City Council members, ministers, bishops, a college president, newsmen, editors, Sheriff Bill Decker, Police Chief Jesse Curry, and other peace officers.

Ruby Tested

Ruby has been undergoing a series of neurological tests which have been requested by defense psychiatrists. The tests have been conducted in the Dallas Neurological Clinic under the observation of psychiatrists representing the defense, the prosecution, and Judge Brown.

As the pretrial maneuvers continue, Dallas speculates on the national publicity it still gets.

A. C. Greene, editor of the editorial page of the Dallas Times Herald, calls it a "second trial." He takes issue with statements in one national publication, one of which describes a "local habit of going armed." Mr. Greene, in a signed column, asks, "Is television that bad back East?"

The same magazine article generalizes that when the blackland clay soil "is dry, it blows up such prodigious dust storms that one might as well comb his hair with a plow." Mr. Greene observes that the writer is "only off a couple of hundred miles west."

Handouts Denied

One of the publications reports that Judge Brown had hired a public-relations consultant. This apparently stemmed from the offer of a local advertising and public relations counsel to help make arrangements for handling press coverage and to provide newsmen with adequate facilities.

The public-relations man said he had never issued one handout nor had he received any fee from anyone or any organization for such a service.

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While the Ruby tests were being made, Henry Wade, Dallas County District Attorney, told newsmen that "there has been a lot of speculation that Dallas hospitals would not accept Ruby for tests. This has been unfair, since there has been no facility in the county that has refused the tests to me personally."

Mr. Wade said he had taken the matter up with several institutions and that only three clinics in the county had the necessary facilities.

In another development, United States District Attorney Barefoot Sanders said that the Warren Commission will make the decision on whether the county prosecutors get physical evidence gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other investigators that involves Ruby's activities.

Mr. Sanders said that evidence gathered by investigators had been turned over to the commission and is no longer in the hands of the Department of Justice.

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